l;Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

and other trees. These are the sacred groves. Here the villagers worship *U ryngkew U basa*, the tutelary deity of the village. These groves are taboo, and it is an offence to cut trees therein for any purpose other than for performing funeral obsequies. The groves are generally not more than a few hundred yards away from the villages. The villages of the Syntengs are similar in character to those of the Khasis. The Wár villages nestle on the hill-sides of the southern border, and are to be seen peeping out from the green foliage with which the southern slopes are clad. In the vicinity of, and actually up to the houses, in the Wár villages, are to be observed large groves of areca-nut, often twined with the *pan* creeper, and of plantain trees, which much enhance the beauty of the scene. Looking at a Wár village from a distance, a darker shade of green is seen; this denotes the limits of the extensive groves where the justly celebrated Khasi orange is grown, which is the source of so much profit to these people. The houses in the Wár villages are generally closer together than those of the Khasis, probably owing to space being limited, and to the villages being located on the slopes of hills. Generally up the narrow village street, and from house to house, there are rough steep stone steps, the upper portion of a village being frequently situated at as high an elevation as 200 to 300 ft. above the lower. In a convenient spot in a Wár village a clear space is to be seen neatly swept and kept free from weeds, and surrounded with a stone wall, where the village tribunals sit, and the elders meet in solemn conclave. Dances also are held here on festive occasions. At Nongjri village there is a fine rubber tree, under whose hollow trunk there are certain sacred stones where the priest performs the village ceremonies.

The Bhoi and Lynngam villages are built in small clearings in the forest, the houses are close together and are built often in parallel lines, a fairly broad space being reserved between the lines of houses to serve as a street. One misses the pretty gardens of the Wár villages, for Bhois and Lynngams attempt nothing of the sort, probably because, unlike the Khasi, a Bhoi or Lynngam village never remains more than two or three years in one spot; generally the villages of these people are in the vicinity of the forest clearings, sometimes actually in the midst

1: Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

(*ki thiar*). The paddy-fields are not manured. The Khasis, when cultivating high lands, select a clayey soil if they can. In the early part of the winter the sods are turned over with the hoe, and they are exposed to the action of the atmosphere for a period of about two months. When the sods are dry, they are placed in piles, which are generally in rows in the fields, and by means of ignited bunches of dry grass within the piles a slow fire is kept up, the piles of sods being gradually reduced to ashes. This is the "paring and burning process" used in England. The ashes so obtained are then carefully raked over the field. Sometimes other manure is also applied, but not when paddy is cultivated. The soil is now fit to receive the seed, either high-land paddy, millet, Job's tears, or other crops, as the case may be. The homestead lands are plentifully manured, and consequently, with attention, produce good crops. They are cultivated with the hoe.

The cultivation of oranges in the southern portion of the district ranks equally in importance with that of the potato in the northern. The orange, which is known in Calcutta as the Chhatak or Sylhet orange, comes from the warm southern slopes of the hills in this district, where it is cultivated on an extensive scale. Although oranges do best when there is considerable heat, they have been known to do well as high as 3,000 ft.; but the usual limit of elevation for the growth of oranges in this district is probably about 1,000 to 1,500 ft. The orange of the Khasi Hills has always been famous for its excellence, and Sir George Birdwood, in his introduction to the "First Letter Book of the East India Company," page 36, refers to the orange and lemon of Garhwál, Sikkim, and Khasia as having been carried by Arab traders into Syria, "whence the Crusaders helped to gradually propagate them throughout Southern Europe." Therefore, whereas the potato was imported, the orange would appear to be indigenous in these hills.

Nurseries.—The seeds are collected and dried by being exposed to the sun. In the spring nurseries are prepared, the ground being thoroughly hoed and the soil pulverised as far as possible. The nursery is walled with stones. The seeds are then sown, a thin top layer of earth being applied. The

1:Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

247 nurseries are regularly watered, and are covered up with layers of leaves to ensure, as far as possible, the retention of the necessary moisture. When the plants are 3 or 4 in. high, they are transplanted to another and larger nursery, the soil of which has been previously well prepared for the reception of the young plants.

245 An orangery is prepared in the following manner:—

The shrubs, weeds and small trees are cut down, leaving only the big trees for the purpose of shade. The plants from the nurseries are planted from 6 ft. to 9 ft. apart. When they have become young trees, many of the branches of the sheltering trees mentioned above are lopped off, so as to admit the necessary amount of sunlight to the young orange trees. As the orange trees increase in size, the sheltering trees are gradually felled. The orchard requires clearing of jungle once in spring and once in autumn. The Khasis do not manure their orange trees, nor do they dig about and expose the roots. The [435] price of orange plants is from 75 to 100 plants per rupee for plants from 1 to 2 ft. in height, and from fifty to seventy-five plants per rupee for plants from 2 to 5 ft. in height. Orange trees bear fruit when from five to eight years old in ordinary soils. In very fertile soils they sometimes bear after four years. A full-grown tree yields annually as many as 1,000 238 oranges, but a larger number is not unknown. The larger portion of the produce is exported from the district to the plains, and to fruit markets at the foot of the hills such as Theria, Mawdon, and Phali-Bazar, on the Shella river, whence it finds its way to the Calcutta and Eastern Bengal markets.

244 Potatoes are raised on all classes of land, except *hali*, or wet paddy land. When the land has been properly levelled and hoed, drains are dug about the field. A cultivator (generally a female), with a basket of seed potatoes on her back and with a small hoe in her right hand, digs holes and with the left hand drops two seed-potatoes into each hole. The holes are about 6 in. in diameter, 6 in. deep, and from 6 to 9 in. apart from one another. Another woman, with a load of manure in a basket on her back, throws a little manure over the seed in the hole, and then covers both up with earth.

I: Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

It will be seen that in the three years following the earthquake of 1897 the exports fell very low indeed. Since 1901 the trade has been steadily recovering, and the exports of 1904 reached half a lakh of maunds.

It will be observed that there has been some improvement, but the exports are still not half what they were in 1881-82. There are two kinds of sweet potatoes grown in the district, the Garo potato (*u phan Karo*), which appears to have been introduced from the Garo Hills, and *u phan saudia*, the latter being distinguished from the Garo potato by its having a red skin, the Garo potato possessing a white skin. These kinds of potato are planted on all classes of land except *lali*, they do best on jhumed and homestead lands. The yam proper (*u phan shyntek*) is also largely grown. The small plant with an edible root called by the Khasis *u sohphang* (*Plumbago zeylanica Benth.*), is also largely grown. The roots of the plant after being peeled are eaten raw by the Khasis. As far as we know, this esculent is not cultivated in the adjoining hill districts. Job's tears (*coix lachryma-Jobi*) * are extensively grown, and are planted frequently with the *sohphlang* mentioned above. This cereal forms a substitute for rice amongst the poorer cultivators. Maize or Indian corn (*u riew hadem*) is grown frequently, thriving best on homestead land, and requires heavy manuring; it is grown in rotation with potatoes. Next in importance to rice comes the millet (*u kruí*), as a staple of food amongst the Khasis. There are three varieties of millets generally to be seen in the Khasi Hills:—*u 'rai-soh* (*setaria Italica*), *u 'rai-shan* (Paspalum sanguinale), and *u 'rai-trah* (Eleusine coracana). *U 'rai-shan* is cultivated in rotation with the potato, *u 'rai-soh* and *u 'rai-trah* are generally cultivated on jhumed land, where they thrive well. Millet is sometimes used instead of rice in the manufacture of spirit by the Khasis; *u rymbai-ja* (*phaseolus calcaratus*), and *ú rymbai khang* (*glycine soja*) are beans which are cultivated occasionally. Khasis highly prize the fruit of the plantain, which they give to infants mashed up. The following are the best known varieties:—*Ka kait khán, ka kait siem, ka kait kulkait, ka kait kemon, ka kait shyieng.*

* Khasi *u sat-riew.*

1:Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

The most important crop on the southern side of the hills is the orange, which has already been referred to in the paragraph dealing with agriculture.

The oranges are sold by the *spah* or 100, which is not a 100 literally, but somewhat over 3,000 oranges. Different places have different *spahs*. At Phali Hat, on the Bogapani River, the *spah* is computed as follows:—

1 Hali = 4 oranges.
8 Holis = 1 Bhar.
100 Bhars = shi spah (one hundred).
= 3,200 oranges.

At Shella the computation is slightly different, being as follows:—

1 Gai = 6 oranges.
5 Gais + 2 oranges = 32 oranges.
4 Bhars = 1 bola = 128 oranges.
27 bolas + 2 bhars = shi spah (100)
= 3,520 oranges.

By another method of calculation the *spah* consists of 3,240 oranges.

The price per *spah* varies from about 10 rupees in good years to Rs. 40, when the orange harvest has been a poor one.

The lime is also cultivated, not separately, but along with the orange. The lime can be grown with success at a higher altitude than the orange. There is extensive betel-nut and *pán* cultivation on the southern slopes of the hills. The betel-nut tree is cultivated in the same manner as in the plains, except that the trees are planted nearer to one another. The trees bear when eight to ten years old. A portion of the crop is sold just after it has been plucked; this is called u *'wái khlúr*, and is for winter consumption. The remainder of the crop is kept in large baskets, which are placed in tanks containing water, the baskets being completely immersed. This kind of betel-nut is called u *'wái um*. The Khasis, like the Assamese, prefer the fresh betel-nut. They do not relish the dry *supári* so much.

The principal *pán* gardens are on the south side of the hills, *pán* not being grown on the northern slopes, except in the neighbourhood of Jirang. The *pán* creepers are raised from cuttings, the latter being planted close to the trees up which they are to be trained. The creeper is manured with leaf

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mould. The plant[1] is watered by means of small bamboo aqueducts which are constructed along the hill-sides, the water being conducted along them often considerable distances. As in the plains, the leaves of the *pán* creeper are collected throughout the year.

The bay leaf (*'la tyrpád*, or *tezpát*) is classified in the *Agricultural Bulletin* as *Cinnamomum tamala*, and there is a note in the column of remarks that "this tree, as well as one or two others of the same genus, yields two distinct products, *tezpát* (bay leaf) and cinnamon bark." The bay leaf is gathered for export from the extensive gardens in Maharam, Malaisohmat, Mawsynram, and other Khasi States. The plants are raised from seed, although there are no regular nurseries, the young seedlings being transplanted from the jungle, where they have germinated, to regular gardens. Bay leaf gardens are cleared of jungle and weeds periodically; otherwise no care is taken of them. The leaf-gathering season is from November to March. The leaves are allowed to dry for a day or two in the sun, and then packed in large baskets for export. The gathering of bay leaf begins when the trees are about four years old.

The following are the other minor crops which are grown in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills:—

Pineapples, turmeric, ginger, pumpkins and gourds, the egg plant, chillies, sesamum, and a little sugar-cane. The arum* (*ka shirie*) is also extensively grown in the hills, and forms one of the principal articles of food amongst the poorer classes; it is generally raised in rotation with potatoes, or is planted along with Job's tears. The stem of the arum is sometimes used as a vegetable, also for feeding pigs.

In the Jowai Sub-Division, notably at Nartiang, there are fairly good mangoes, which are more free from worms than those grown in the plains of Assam.

The Bhois and Lynngams cultivate lac. They plant *arhar dal*, a *landso*, in their fields, and rear the lac insect on this plant. Last year the price of lac at Gauhati and Palasbari markets rose as high as Rs. 50 per maund of 82 lbs., it is said, but the price at the outlying markets of Singra and Boko was

* Colocasia esculenta, Beng. *Kachu*.

[1] [i.e., the pán ... Ed.]

8: Gurdon G-3 (no date) 1904 AR7 Khasi AR7

—the *Shyngkup*, or porch, being flush with the ground. The *nengpei*, or centre room, is approached by a flight of steps. There are no windows, except one, which is bored on one side to admit light and air,—this is called the *pongshai*. Both Khasis and Syntengs, like other Indo-Chinese races, are much addicted to gambling, and drinking to excess is a national vice. Christianity has, through the agency of the Welsh Calvinistic Mission, gained a very striking extension, and may be said indeed to be leavening the whole nation. Schools are numerous, and are pretty well attended by girls as well as boys. The Christians, and those who have come under the influence of Christianity, have adopted a high standard of comfort, and their houses resemble English cottages more nearly than the huts with which one is familiar in India.

Agriculture.—The Khasis do not use the plough; they cultivate their fields with a peculiar-shaped hoe, or *mokkhiew*. They cultivate rice in the valleys, the rice being sown broadcast and the fields irrigated often after considerable labour. They also cultivate hill rice on the uplands, which they sow broadcast. The potato, which was introduced into the Khasi Hills by Mr. David Scott about the year 1830,[1] is extensively cultivated and forms one of the principal articles of export. Job's-tears (*Coix lachryma*), several kinds of millet, Indian-corn, the *Sohphlang* (*Flemingia vestita*), are also largely cultivated. The valleys on the southern slopes of the hills have extensive orange groves, the oranges, especially those grown in the neighbourhood of Shella, being famous for their quality. The betel, vine, and areca nut are also largely grown on the southern side of the hills and in the low valleys, these plantations being irrigated by elaborate systems of aqueducts. The leaf of the bay tree (*Latyrpad*) is collected, and is exported to the Sylhet plains. The Syntengs differ from the Khasis, in that they make use of the plough. Both Khasis and Syntengs are industrious cultivators, and they possess a certain rough and ready knowledge of the uses of manure. A more detailed description of agriculture in these hills will be given in the monograph.

[1] Khasi and Jaintia Hills Administration Report for 1875-76 by Colonel Bivar.

2. *Matriarchal customs and law of inheritance of property.*—The mother is the head of the house, and is both owner and the custodian of the family property as long as she lives. Males can own no property amongst either Khasis or Syntengs except self-acquired property. On the death of the mother, in the case of the Khasis, the family property passes to the youngest daughter. According to some authorities, however, the property would in practice be divided amongst all the surviving daughters. Failing daughters, the property passes to the youngest niece, and failing a niece, to the youngest female cousin. The same

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CHAPTER II

VILLAGE COMMUNITY

As models of a Khasi village community, I have taken my data for the discussion presented in this chapter from two villages situated in the Kadashinong area, Sohkynduh and Kongton, with comparative data from Shella and Jatinga villages.

Sohkynduh and Kongton are situated in one of the most secluded spots of the Khasi Hills and the economy is shifting cultivation, with millet as its main product. Only a few Christians are found; most of the population are pagans. Shella is situated on the southern border of the Khasi Hills, adjacent to Pakistan. Jatinga is in the North Cachar Hills, surrounded by patrilineal tribes, such as the Zemi-Naga, the Kuki and the Cacharee. The economy of both villages is pan-leaf and orange cultivation. In Shella, Hindu, Christian and pagan are found among the villagers almost in the same proportions, while the Jatinga villagers are all Christian. The two Kadashinong villages, Shella and Jatinga, differ from one another not only in their religious and economic aspects, but in overt culture, dialect and political organization as well. (Additional information concerning Shella and Jatinga is given in Appendix.) Shella and Jatinga are unique among Khasi villages and quite sophisticated, having been developed under a trading economy, with considerable contacts with other peoples, including Hindus. I selected these villages in order to ascertain how far the structural principle which operates in the Kadashinong villages can be found to act also in totally different economic and environmental situations.

121 621 771 [101] [245] 184 621 121

[P. 101]

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there are none of their descendants in Jatinga. Summing up, the first party who settled at Jatinga was composed of people of the following five clans:

1. Suchiang — Lakhanbang, his sister, Laptho, and her daughter, Kloribon, his brother, Pryntah.
2. Suchen — Munik and his younger brother, Sain.
3. Phanwar — Misibon and her younger sister, Diasibon.
4. Rupsi — Sintu, the wife of Pryntah.
5. Suiam — Tahin, the wife of Sain.

Among them, Suchen had no female member. Phanwar had no successor: Misibon had no issue and Diasibon did not marry. Therefore, Suchiang, Rupsi and Suiam are the oldest clans in present Jatinga. Suchiang and Rupsi especially are the dominant and richest groups among the present population.

This was the time when the railway from Gauhati to Silchar was being constructed. Some Khasi labourers were working at Haflong on the construction of the railway. After the foundation of Jatinga, these Khasi workers established marriage relations with the Khasi of Jatinga, and finally, upon completion of the railway, many of them became the inhabitants of Jatinga. The present members of the Dome and Siangshai clans are the descendants of these people, and they form a considerable number of the present inhabitants of Jatinga. Besides them, there were a few other Khasi at Haflong who were engaged in trading business. In the course of time, they also had marital relations with Jatinga people and came to Jatinga.

After five years had elapsed they found that in spite of their hard work the land was not favourable to them. Many of them left Jatinga. This was the hardest period of Jatinga history.

The second migration (1919-1925).

The railway which once had been blocked was reopened in 1919. The people who had left Jatinga came back to settle there. This time the circumstances seemed to them quite favourable. The pan trees which they had planted earlier were growing and they could gather considerable produce. The village grew bigger around 1920 as a result of new immigrants from Jaintia; most of them were people from Bataw, the village of the founder. In this period, many immigrants came from Jaintia not only to Jatinga but also to Sylhet, Borkhala and other places outside the Khasi-Jaintia Hills. It seems that by this time the over-populated Jaintia realised that these areas were favourable for their new home. However, the successive waves of Jaintia immigrants to Jatinga ceased by 1925, its population having reached saturation point.

Orange production brought economic prosperity to the people of Jatinga. Wealthy villagers employed temporary labourers from the Jaintia Hills every year. Some of these labourers came with their families and others came individually. During their stay at Jatinga, some of them married and settled there. Hence, there are also descendants of such labourers among the present inhabitants of Jatinga.

Some Aspects of Descent Groups.

Throughout the history of Jatinga, immigrations have always been undertaken by a family (elementary family, siblings) or by an individual, but never by a group of clan members. Therefore, the present population is grouped in small descent groups according to each migration. Though some of them happened to have the same clan name, their history of migration and their

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like the Zemi-Naga, the Cacharee and the Kuki. But after the period of economic prosperity as I shall describe in the next section, the Jatinga people reached a rather high level of education, while most of the neighbouring tribes remained illiterate. Their standard of living likewise improved. Fashionable girls of Jatinga who have studied at the Convent school in Shillong, and speak English and Hindi, cannot marry half-naked tribesmen who work in the jungle. They prefer to intermarry with Moslem, Panjabee or Assamese who belong to amore sophisticated community, and through whom they can enjoy urban life. Thus the orientation of the intermarriage of the people of Jatinga has changed, along with the growth of Jatinga.

It should be noted that intermarriages came mostly through the contacts at Haflong, where people used to go once a week for the bazaar, rather than through direct contacts with neighbouring villages.

Economy of Jatinga and its Relation to Neighbouring Tribes.

It is very interesting to find two different kinds of economy in the same ecological background: Jatinga Khasi practise pan-leaf and orange cultivation and depend mainly on a trading economy, while the other neighbouring tribal peoples practise jhum cultivation, almost a subsistence economy. This situation has remained unchanged for the last fifty years since the establishment of Jatinga village.

The first Jatinga immigrants occupied one ridge of the mountain where the present Jatinga is situated. Formerly, this land belonged to the Zemi-Naga, one of the old inhabitants of the Cachar Hills, who possessed a vast jungle area for jhum cultivation. It seems that there was no objection to the Khasi occupying this small spot: it was apparently too small an area for the jhum cultivator —pan-leaf cultivation of the Khasi requires less than one twentieth of the land of the usual jhum cultivation. The Khasi who started pan-leaf cultivation were able to accumulate some capital, and after several years they started orange gardens. They had had experience of orange cultivation in their homeland, but this was the first time they had operated commercially.

The success of this orange cultivation was beyond their dreams. Hearing of good oranges at Jatinga, many Bengalee merchants from Dacca, Sylhet, Silchar and Gauhati began to come to buy them. Moreover, the village had the great advantage of being situated near the railway station. Oranges were sold by carloads. Unimaginable wealth came to the Jatinga people. Especially the founder's family, including his brother's and sister's, became extraordinarily wealthy; their income used to be Rs. 20,000 a year. The children were sent to the school which was established in the village and some were educated at colleges in Dacca, Sylhet and Shillong. The villagers had beautiful houses built by Manipuri and Bengalee carpenters. Actually the houses of Jatinga were known as some of the best construction in Assam.

Like the Shella people, they were managers of gardens and employed workers. Wealthy households used to engage several labourers annually, most of them from Jaintia where the Jatinga people had originated. These workers were provided with shelter in the servant quarters of their employer's house, but they had to provide meals for themselves. They were paid daily according to the work done. They were available to other households, when their employer had no work. Some labourers were also engaged locally among the Zemi-Naga, the Cacharee and the Kuki, though not as many as among the Jaintia. These local tribes were fairly well occupied by their jhum cultivation, and not used to being employed as workers. Therefore, most of them were not regular

15: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

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workers and they were few in number.[1] They were particularly employed for such work as the clearing of jungle for new pan gardens in summer. 464

In the orange season (December to February) the number of workers increased and they were paid more: Rs. 1/8 were paid[2] for one load (one person carrying 80 pounds of oranges, from an orange garden to the railway station—about two miles). Usually a worker made three to five trips a day. Many workers from Jaintia used to come for this particular season. 245 464 465

Semi-permanent workers were engaged for wet rice fields. They were usually Hindu cultivators: since these Khasi and other tribes do not know the technique of wet cultivation, plains people like the Biharee immigrants were engaged. These workers were provided with servants' quarters where they lived with their wives and children. However, very few Jatinga households possessed rice fields. 243 464

The economic prosperity of Jatinga reached its climax during the period from 1934 to 1940. Since 1942, the orange production has been decreasing. In 1945, a serious disease attacked the orange gardens as well as the pan-leaf gardens. Besides, by depriving Jatinga, as it had Shella, of their most important markets, Dacca and Sylhet, the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 caused a serious economic depression in the whole region. On the other hand, because of the past prosperity, the population has rapidly increased during the last ten years. The serious economic condition of Jatinga is illustrated in the petition which was submitted by the Jatinga people when the Governor of Assam visited those areas in January 1956. It runs thus: 245 434 731 161 458

"Since the last ten years or so, with the increase of population in the village and with the loss of fertility of the soil, the people were faced with economic depression. At present they are facing acute shortage of land they have also no scope to adopt other forms of cultivation like jhuming and wet rice cultivation, etc. Moreover, there has been successive attack of Bright's disease which destroyed and wiped out all the orange and pan gardens. And as such, majority of the families have to depend for their livelihood on daily wages. . . ."

It is indeed a serious situation for them, because the Khasi do not produce staple foods, such as rice; their economy is completely dependent on the trade of their products by which they purchase their main provisions, clothes, etc. Other peoples round Jatinga, being jhum cultivators, can at least get rice and cotton: the minimum requirements, staple foods and clothing are available even in the worst conditions, so that they can at least maintain themselves though the standard of living is low. As I stated before, a few households in Jatinga possessed rice fields, but the majority had none. Recently they rented some plots of jhum field for rice cultivation from Zemi-Naga of neighbouring villages.[3] However, its yield was but a small percentage of their consumption. A few 182 434 [433] [243]

1. If they had worked in the gardens of Jatinga, they might have got more profit than from their own jhum fields. For one day's labour, they got Ans. 8/. For one month, they could earn Rs. 15 with which they could buy about 4-5 maunds of rice (one maunds paddy cost Rs. 3-4). For one year it became 50 maunds, which was impossible to produce in a jhum field by a single person's labour. [435]

2. These rates, including the figures of note 1, apply to 1956.

3. Jatinga villagers told me that Zemi-Naga were kind enough to lend them their field for a negligible rent, though they had not enough for themselves. Zemi-Naga said that they owed much to Jatinga in the past, so that now they sympathised with the condition of Jatinga, and offered some parts of their jhum field. [427] [628]

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182 434 very wealthy households still maintain their former economic activities, but the majority have been impoverihed, becoming daily labourers for the wealthy ones or for road construction. Thus considerable internal economic differentiation has begun to appear in the community.

Though the recent economic depression brought poverty to Jatinga, the 182 standard of living is still strikingly higher than that of neighbouring tribes. Studying such economic aspects of Jatinga, I wondered at first why these • 245 neighbouring tribes have remained as they were, except for temporary employ- 648 ment at Jatinga: why, looking at the prosperity of Jatinga, they did not adopt the way of the Jatinga people?

Indeed some of them attempted to imitate the Jatinga economy, but the results were unfortunately not favourable to them. First, both pan-leaf and orange cultivations were entirely new to the tribal peoples, and the technique was quite different from that of dry rice cultivation in the jhum field. Pan cultivation requires very delicate care which is almost impossible to manage for people who have been accustomed to the primitive jhuming cultivation. For instance, when they go into pan gardens, they have to wash themselves and put on special clean clothes in order to prevent the spread of epidemic leaf disease. Tribal people, who seldom wash their clothes, or mostly go naked, could hardly keep pan gardens. In this respect the Khasi are entirely different, having specialized in this economy for a long period, even as they believe, from time immemorial.

On the other hand, the technique of orange cultivation is much easier than that of pan-leaf, but it takes several years to obtain a yield; it requires considerable capital to begin with. For the jhum cultivators, who usually did not have cash income nor funds, it was almost impossible to start it, while the Khasi were able to raise funds from the selling of the pan-leaf. Furthermore, the [423] management of such gardens, either pan-leaf or orange, differs also from that of the jhum field as it entirely depends on individual enterprise based on private land ownership, which is new for those tribes where the community owns the land. Therefore the possibility of starting orange gardens is restricted to special individuals among them belonging to exceptionally rich and powerful households. A few households in neighbouring villages did, in fact, start orange gardens, adopting the technique of the Jatinga people. This was around 1942 and they were expecting to have the yield around 1950. However, unfortunately, when their oranges began to come into production, orange disease started in Jatinga and spread all over these areas. Their dream therefore never came true.

Besides oranges, some of them also established gardens of bananas, jackfruits, and papaias, which were more successful than the oranges. These plantations started much earlier than oranges in this area, though not in great quantity. The products were sold to the Jatinga people who sold them again to Bengalee merchants. The question arises why were they not sold directly to Bengalee merchants, when the profit would have been much greater.

This aspect of the market economy touches upon very interesting problems 182 concerning the relations between tribal and Hindu peoples. Such tribal peoples who live on a primitive subsistence level usually do not have direct contact 44 with the peoples of the plains. There is always an intermediary between them. 648 In this case it is the Jatinga people who know both tribal life and Hindu life. They are also in between culturally. If a tribal cultivator sells his produce to a Hindu merchant, he would most certainly be cheated by the cunning merchant, as he is quite ignorant of trade. Tribal men do deal with markets directly, but only on a small scale at Haflong bazaar, and without making a profit: it is just the exchange of their basketful of jhum produce for an iron

Uptill now the main sources of forest revenue in the district are timber, limestone, lac, bay leaf and elephants. 13

2.6 **Agriculture.**—The greater proportion of population of the distict subsist on agriculture. The staple crops raised in the district are wet and dry rice, various kinds of millets, maize, potatoes, pineapples, oranges, arecanut, betel-leaf and bay leaf. To a smaller extent they grow in the gardens round their houses vegetables, pulses and occasionally sugarcane. 24

2.6.1 **The main crops : Rice.**—While wet rice is grown in the valleys with which the hills are intersected, dry rice is grown on the hill sides. Highland rice is seldom grown twice running on the same spot for after one crop the soil is exhausted and a fallow period of four to five years is usually allowed. Jowai subdivision is predominantly a wet rice producing area. In Shillong subdivision main wet rice pockets are the Bhoi area stretching upto the sung valley and the northern portion of the plateau, the Mylliem state, the south-western portion of the district and the southern plain portion of the district adjoining East Pakistan. Dry rice is grown more or less through out the district. While Jowai subdivision can claim self sufficiency in rice, Shillong subdivision is a deficit area and the people in this subdivisio n particularly those in the southern portion (border area) of the district have to depend on supplies from outside. Though there is no reliable statistices of the area under rice, a rough estimate is given elsewhere in the land utilisation table. 243

Maize and millet.—Are two important food crops of the district grown more or less throughout the district.

Potatoes are extensively grown in the higher slopes and in the lower land which are well drained. Generally two crops of potatoes are raised annually in the district. In respect of production and export of potato this district occupies the topmost position in the State of Assam. 244

Orange, betel leaf and arecanut are most extensively grown in the southern base of the hills, *i.e.* all over the border areas. Oranges are also grown in Bornihat areas, in the northern portion of the district. Orange and betelnut plantations extend from the foot of the hills to a height of about 1500 feet and are carried up the ravines which score the southern face of the high plateau. The district is an important producer of Bay-leaf which is abundantly found in the border areas of the district. Other valuable cash crops of the district are black pepper, turmeric, chillies, ginger, pineapple and various other fruits. 245

2.6.2 **Agricultural seasons.**—For wet rice, the lands which are naturally irrigated by virtue of their very location, are ploughed or hoed by about the middle of February and seed sown in May or June. Harvesting takes place in October and November. For dry rice, the land is hoed by about the middle of September, the solds are collected into little heaps and burnt and by February the land is again hoed up and the seed sown in April - May. Harvesting goes 243

on from October to December. For millets the seed is sown in April-May and reaped about six months later. Maize is usually sown in April-May and ripens in August - September. For potato, generally three crops are raised in the district ; the first is sown in December-January and harvested in April-May, the second is sown in February-March and is gathered in June-July and the third is sown in July-August and is harvested in November-December.

For oranges and betelnut the orchards are cleared of weeds twice a year. Harvesting of orange takes place from October to January. Betelnut ripens at the beginning of the year and are collected between February and May.

2.6.3 **Agricultural implements.**—The usual agricultural implements are a hoe, a sickle, three or four kinds of doas, a harrow, a crowbar which is used for the construction of irrigation channels, 'sierras' and winnowing baskets. Bullock drawn plough is used in wet paddy cultivation in parts of Jowai subdivision and in Bhoi area and resembles the one in use in the plains of the State.

2. 6. 4. **General cultural practices.**—The cultivators mostly adhere to their indigenous practices of cultivation. Rotation of crops is not widely used. Cultivation of rice is usually done by broadcasting the seeds though transplanting is also in vogue in some areas. Mixed cropping is widely practised. Cultivation by making terraces in the hill slopes is gaining popularity in the district.

2.7 **Cottage Industries.**—Cottage Industries, it appears, have not found very great favour among the people of the district. A few families here and there manufacture iron implements, earthenware, pottery, baskets, mats and jewellery. In striking contrast with other districts weaving of cotton clothes is rare among the Khasis. The Mikirs in Bhoi area and in areas adjoining North Cachar and Mikir Hills practice it only for their domestic consumption. At present, the Government is trying to popularise weaving in the district and this has been welcomed by the Khasis. Among other cottage industries production of eri cocoon in the northern part of the district adjoining Kamrup district and bee keeping throughout the district are worth mentioning.

2.8 **The People.**—The Khasis and Jaintias are a short sturdy race distinct from the neighbouring hill tribes. By nature they are hardy and laborious and in respect of manual labour, they are free from any inhibition. Side by side with the Khasis live the Mikirs, Garos and Nepalis who form respectively 7.32 percent, 3.38 percent and 3·27 per cent of the total rural population. Besides, there are plains people who are mainly concentrated in the town of Shillong. In the marketing centres of the border area there are a large number of Bengali Hindus who dominate the bulk of the trade in the border areas.

2.9 **Occupation.**—The greater portion of the population of the district subsists on cultivation. More than 75 percent of the rural households are predominantly agricultural. The industrious Khasi agriculturists males and females have a high regard for hard labour

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CHAPTER III

The Border Area

121 131 **3. 1 Definition of Border Area.**—The term 'border areas' although very frequently used does not refer to any well demarcated area. It was, therefore, decided after a joint discussion between the Director of Statistics with the Deputy Commissioner of the district and Subdivisional Officer, Jowai, that area within 20 miles of the Indo-Pak border line would be considered as the 'border area' for the purpose of the present survey. The list of the villages falling in this area was supplied by the Deputy Commissioner and the Subdivisional Officer.

[161] **3. 2 Condition of the Border Area before partition.**—The border area under review thus comprised of the southern slopes of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and a narrow strip of plains adjoining the southern slopes running along the Pakistan border. The area extends laterally over a length of about 120 miles, roughly from Maheskhola on the west to Sonapur on the east thus covering an area of 2,400 sq. miles approximately, comprising of 454 villages inhabited by population of 74 thousands.

245 311 [482] Barring the barren and rocky top plateaus the slopes are utilised or the production of valuable cash crops on intensive scale. These slopes provide suitable soil and climate for the production crops like arecanut, tezpatta, betel-leaf, oranges; pineapples and other fruits. On account of rich yields which such plantations give to the cultivators these slopes were, more densely inhabited and intensively cultivated than would appear possible from the topography of the area. Even the most inaccessible tracts in the slopes has been converted into rich orchards, wherefrom the produce was carried by headloads over steep gradients for several miles. Due to steep gradients little other use, except some jhuming here and there, could be made of this area.

439 Because of the very topography, this land had its natural connections with Sylhet district now forming part of East Pakistan. From time immemorial the area had a flourishing trade with Sylhet district. It was a two-way traffic. The cash crops found eager buyers in the people of Sylhet, from whom in turn the people in the border area obtained supplies of rice, fish, vegetables and other necessities of daily life. Thus in prepartition days they enjoyed a very prosperous and settled economy. The rich buildings in the border area villages which are now lottering away, bear eloquent testimony to the past prosperity of the border economy.

439 458 648 With the partition of the country in 1947, trade with the plains of Sylhet, now forming part of East Pakistan, was restricted. As a result the whole economy of this region was completely shattered and the countryside which once hummed with activity and abundance was over-shadowed with unemployment, poverty and despair. All the cash crops the mainstay of the border people lost the market in East Pakistan. for want of communication facilities the produce could not be

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439 East Pakistan to which the people in the border areas were entitled
648 in the strength of various trade agreements of the Government of
458 India with the authorities in Pakistan, were also scanty. The situation was still more aggravated due to the stringent measures adopted by authorities in Pakistan, on the plea of prevention of smuggling, in December, 1957 when the entire border trade virtually came to a standstill.

245 This chaos in border economy has resulted in widespread unem-
439 ployment among the border people. There being no market for the
458 produce, the owners ceased to take proper care of their orchards and plantations. As a result thousands of labourers who were employed in the
464 orchards were thrown out of employment. Similar was the condition of those who were employed in the transportation of various commodities such as merchandise of trade etc. A large section of the people engaged in collection of limestone were also rendered unemployed with the set back received by the trade in limestone with East Pakistan. Due to stoppage of trans-border trade, petty traders engaged in distributive trade, also suffered.

423 Many of the border people possessing paddy lands and orchards in
648 areas that are located in Pakistan had to abandon them. The following
458 table will show the amount of land lying in Pakistan belonging to the farmer in the selected villages of border area :—

TABLE A-2

Name of villages	Area of land lost through partition		
	No. of familes who possessed land in Pakistan	Area (acres)	Average per family (acres)
1. Nongjri	87	357·86	4·11
2. Shella	9	175·40	19·40
3. Bholaganj	15	108·00	7·20
4. Balat	2	13·50	6·75
5. Mawdon	nil	..	..
6. Lyngkhat	5	85·00	17·00
7, Darrang	16	568·75	35·55
8, Syndai	3	43·33	14·44
9, Amki	8	40·67	5·08
10. Umshnong	nil	..	..

[167 A few families who did not have any landed interest on this side
653] of the border were reported to have migrated to Pakistan. Most of the families are even now paying tax to East Pakistan authorities even though they are not getting any returns because they do not want to lose their right on land.

241 311 433 **8·4—Relative importance of crops**—Total gross farm area harvested amounted to 3324.48 acres in Border area, 1700.40 acres in Project area and 561 acres in General area.

From above table it will be seen that in Border area, orange accounted for the highest proportion of harvested area, *i.e.*, 31 per cent, followed in order of importance by betel nut, paddy, betel leaf and millet which respectively accounts for 17 per cent, 19 per cent, 9 per cent and 3 per cent of the total harvested area. Other crops which account for 248.68 acres (7 per cent) includes maize, tezpata, banana, turmeric, dal, blackpepper and other fruit crops.

Considering sale proceeds, it is clear that betelnut happens to be the main earner accounting for 60 per cent of the total sale proceeds followed by orange, paddy and betel leaf which respectively account for 22 per cent, 6 per cent and 5 per cent of the total sale proceeds. Thus orange and betel leaf which in pre-partition days were the main earner-crops in the Border area have been passed to second and forth position respectively—the proportions fetched by them, particularly by betel leaf, being negligible. On other hand as there is a good market for betel nut, Border people have taken to betel nut cultivation in a more extensive scale.

241 245 311 433 It is significant that while in Border area total farm area is 3914 acres, total area harvested comes to only 3325 acres including area under mixed cropping which is in wide practice in Border area particularly for orange, betelnut, and for some other minor crops. Thus proportion of unharvested farm area emerges out to be considerable which can be accounted for the following reasons:—

(1) The farm area includes some new gardens particularly of betelnuts which usually take quite a few years to bear fruits.

[44] (2) Reportedly a large number of orange and betel-leaf gardens were not harvested at all as there was no market for them.

241 433 44 Turning our attention to Project area and General area, it will be found that paddy eclipses all other crops in as much as in the two areas it respectively covers 82 per cent and 61 per cent of the total harvested area in the respective area. In Project area paddy is followed by Betel leaf, orange, potato and betelnut in order of importance while in General area it is followed by potato, millet, orange, betel leaf and betelnut. In both the areas as will be seen from table above, almost all the crops retain their respective position in value. Considering sale proceed, in Project area, paddy occupies the highest position accounting for 77 per cent of the total sale proceeds followed by betel leaf, orange, betelnut and potato accounting respectively for 8 per cent, 5 per cent, 5 per cent and 1 per cent of the total sale proceeds. In General area, in order of importance of sale proceed paddy, potato and betelnut are worth mentioning fetching respectively 45 per cent, 30 per cent and 4 per cent of the total sale proceeds.

8·5—In the following paragraphs we have reproduced the yield rates of different crops, calculated on the basis of area harvested and total produces reported by the cultivators. For assesment of correct yield rates it is necessary to conduct a scientifically designed crops cutting survey which in view of its largeness in magnitude and other complexities associated with the type of experiments, could not be fitted in with the programme of the present survey. It is admitted that the yield estimates worked out by us are proved to be subjected to the usual limitations of this type of data.

Yield

1. **Paddy.**—It will be seen from table above that average yields of paddy per acre for Border area, General area and Project area are respectively 8.38 maunds, 12.92 maunds and 12.60 maunds and for the district as a whole it comes to 11.65 maunds though there are cases where maximum yield goes to above 18 maunds per acre. Thus it is seen that the average yield is much less than the average yield for the State of Assam (plain district) which is above 18 maunds per acre. Average yield in Border area is evidently much smaller. Apart from low fertility of land, another reason for this low average is that in a number of villages selected from Border area such as Syndai, Amki and Lumshnong, there was widespread havoc to standing crops was caused by wild elephants.

2. **Potato.**—The average for the three areas comes to 21·61 maunds per acre which is in contrast to the State average of above 40 maunds per acre. Our estimate has in fact been lowered due to inclusion of a few villages in the foot hills where potatoes don't grow well, otherwise in a number of high altitude villages, yield per acre well exceeded 40 maunds. The average for Border area is rather too low. Apart from unsuitability of Border land of high altitude potatoes another reason for this low average is that during the reference year the crop suffered from widespread incidence of pests and insects.

3. **Orange.**—yield of orange in Border area, Project area and General area was found to be 5. 27 luties or 5396 numbers against 16.76 luties or 17162 numbers and 2.80 luties or 2867 numbers respectively Thus the average yield in Border area, even considering the mixed nature of some gardens is much low. The reasons are obvious.

4. **Betelnut**—Average yield per acre from Border area, Project area and General area was found to be 2.93 luties (18752 numbers), 4.11 luties (26304 numbers) ann 3.03 luties (19392 numbers) respectively bringing the average for all the three areas to 2.95 luties per arce.

5. **Betel leaf.**—Average yield per acre works out at 17·15 kuris, 50.64 kuris and 24 kuris in Border area, Project area and General area respectively. Thus in Booder area the average is much lower. This is due to the fact that most of the gardens remained unplucked for want of market for leaf.

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There is considerable trade carried on in
245 439 *tezpát* or bay leaves, the trees being extensively cultivated by the inhabitants of the lower slopes of the hills on the Sylhet border. The finest oranges in India are also grown in groves in the same tract, the value of the trade in which is now (1876) estimated to amount 237 to £3760 per annum. Lac is gathered by the Míkírs in the Jáintiá 439 Hills, but not to any great extent. Bees are both domesticated and found wild, and an extensive trade in bees-wax is carried on, 231 the amount exported being estimated at from three hundred to four hundred *maunds* annually. The whole of the Hills, where there is 233 no forest, and where the land is not under cultivation, consists of 621 rich pasture grounds, which are held in common by the villagers 651 and pay no revenue to Government.

137 The forests of the Khásí and Jáintiá Hills do not yield much profit either to the British Government or to the chiefs. There [648] are no reserved forests in the District; and according to the Deputy-Conservator, the total area of unreserved forest, *i.e.* of land covered [659] with timber trees and not at present required for *jhúm* cultivation, is only 150 square miles. The trees found are chiefly pine, and those classified as 'mixed upper hill forests.' At an elevation of 3000 feet, the Pinus Kasia predominates over all other vegetation and forms almost pure pine forests. It is found also at lower heights, and there attains larger dimensions, but only in the case of isolated trees. The 'mixed upper hill forests' are confined to a series of sacred groves, which clothe the topmost ridge of the watershed between the valleys of the Brahmaputra and Surmá. The characteristic trees are those of a temperate vegetation, chiefly consisting of oaks, chestnuts, magnolia, Schima, Cinnamomum, Prunus, Engelhardtia, etc. There are also numerous other timber trees, including the valuable *sál* (Shorea robusta) and the rubber tree (Ficus elastica); but on the whole the Khásí Hills are remarkable for the [648] absence of forest. Early in 1874-75 measures were taken to put a [659] stop to the indiscriminate burning of the forests, and the Siems and village officers were made responsible for the conservancy of the sacred groves. These endeavours have met with some success; but it is a very difficult thing to change the habits of a population, or to induce uncivilised tribes to incur a small temporary inconvenience for the sake of future benefit. The total area directly protected from fire during the year 1875-76 is returned at 3618 acres; the expenditure was Rs. 122; and in ten prosecutions for breaches of forest rules, twenty-three persons were convicted.

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243 the District, nor do any superior kinds of cereals appear to have been substituted for inferior ones.

THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF RICE CULTIVATION, in English and Khásí, are as follow:—The blade as it first shows, *spoh-u-kyba;* the blade when well above the ground, *la-thylleng-u-kyba;* the ears when first formed, *lam-mat;* the ears beginning to ripen, *kyr-tem;* the ripe ears, *la-hih;* unhusked rice, *u-kyba;* husked rice, *u-khaw;* cooked rice, *ka-ja.*

262 [435] [782] THE VARIOUS SOLID AND LIQUID PREPARATIONS made from rice are the following:—(1) *U-kypu*, cakes of different kinds, sold at six or twelve for a penny, according to size. (2) *U-shirá* or *gáh-khir*, prepared by the hillmen as an offering to their deity at the conclusion of the harvest. (3) *Kadam*, fermented rice water, sold at the rate of from three-farthings to threepence per quart, according to the strength of the liquor. (4) *Ka kiad-phatika* or *ka kiad-hdrak*, a kind of spirits distilled from rice, and sold at from threepence to fourpence-halfpenny per quart.

273 435

243 OTHER CEREALS.—Indian corn, or *u-riu-ha-dem*, is grown on homestead lands. The ground is first manured, and the seed is sown about the middle of April. The crop is fit for cutting in September and October. A kind of millet seed called *u-krdi* is commonly sown with paddy on high lands. For want of more suitable land, however, this crop is often cultivated by itself on rocky slopes; and when this course is adopted, the jungle is first cut down in February and burnt. The seed is sown in April, and the crop gathered in December.

244 PULSES AND FIBRES.—Only two kinds of pulses are grown in the Hills, *u-rym-bai-ktung* and *u-rym-bai-jil*, both of which are varieties of beans. They are sown on high lands in March and April, and gathered in December. The only fibre is that made from the pine-apple stalk, which is largely used for making netted bags.

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245 [439] MISCELLANEOUS CROPS.—(1) Oranges.—There are numerous orange plantations in the neighbourhood of Cherrá Púnjí, and the fruit is exported to all parts of Bengal. In the year 1876-77 the estimated exports were 9,400,000 in number, valued at Rs. 37,600, or £3760, at the rate of Rs. 12 or £1, 4s. per three thousand. These figures show a decrease in number as compared with the estimated export twenty years ago. The trees flower in March or April, and the fruit ripens in October and the following months. In some cases the oranges are allowed to remain on the trees till March, but

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generally the gathering does not extend beyond January. As a rule, the cultivation is confined to the valleys and slopes on the southern face of the hills. (2) Pine-apples are also largely cultivated on the southern slopes, and grow to great perfection on the limestone formation. The fruit ripens in May or June, and is exported in considerable quantities. In 1876-77 the export of pine-apples was valued at Rs. 8000 or £800. (3) Potatoes are extensively grown on slopes of high land, and also in the low-lying fields where the land is well drained. The tuber was first introduced into the Hills in 1830 by Mr. Scott, who was then the Governor-General's Agent. The season for sowing commences about the middle of February when the rains set in early, and in April when they are late. The ground is dug up and carefully manured with burnt earth, and holes are dug about nine inches deep, and the same distance from each other. These holes are then partially filled in with loose earth, and a potato or two halves of one placed in each. They are then filled up with dry manure and soil. When the plant is fifteen or twenty days old, the ground about the roots is loosened and the plant earthed up, and the land is kept carefully weeded. In about four months after sowing, the crop is gathered. During the cold weather a second crop is raised, the seeds being planted in September and the tubers dug up in December. Potato cultivation has largely increased of late years in the District. In 1876-77 the exports were approximately estimated at 200,500 *maunds*, or 7480 tons, valued at Rs. 501,250 or £50,125, at the rate of Rs. 2. 8 per *maund*, or £7 per ton. (4) Sugar-cane is grown, but not to any great extent; cuttings are planted in March, and the cane ripens by November or December. (5) *Pán* is extensively cultivated, the runner being trained up trees standing in deep and shady valleys. Planting is carried on during the months of April and May, but the leaves are not fit to be gathered till the plant is two years old. (6) The *supári* or betel-nut (Areca catechu), called *u-kwai* by the Khásiás, is grown on the lower southern slopes of the hills, and, together with the *pán* leaf, is consumed in immoderate quantities by the inhabitants, who measure distance by the number of *páns* consumed on a journey. It is also exported to the plains. (7) *U-soh-phlang*, a root crop resembling a small turnip, is sown on high lands in April and gathered in September. It is a poor vegetable, but the natives of the Hills are fond of it, and eat it either raw or cooked. (8) Cotton is grown on high lands and

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extent of waste land, some is cultivated in a manner resembling the *jûm* system,—successive crops are grown on a patch of land till the soil is exhausted, and then another spot is selected, where the same process is repeated afresh, but without anything that can be called a *jûmid* tenure. Any renting of land is exceptional, and there are no recognised rates of rent. The Deputy-Commissioner, however, states that an ordinary rate for rented land would be from two to three shillings a year for as much land as an individual can cultivate with his own hands.

MANURE is generally used in raising rice and potatoes. It is seldom purchased, the dung and litter of the cattle and other animals about the house being generally utilized for the purpose. For rice fields a little less than half a ton of manure, but for potatoes upwards of two tons, is required per acre. Manure, if purchased, would cost from 2s. 7½d. to 3s. 9d. per acre for rice land, and for potato fields from 12s. to 18s. per acre.

IRRIGATION for agricultural purposes is regularly practised. Water is brought to the land by means of channels cut from the numerous hill streams in the neighbourhood of the fields. Wells and tanks are unknown. The work of irrigation by means of these channels is very easily carried on, and at a very trifling outlay. Rotation of crops is not practised in the Hills.

MODEL FARM.—The Shillong Model Farm, established in 1873, has not proved a success. Experiments tried with wheat give some hope that cold-weather crops may profitably be introduced into the Hills. Two new varieties of potato—'red roughs' and 'pheasant's eye'—were successfully introduced in 1873-74; but these are not looked upon favourably by the Khásis, as they only give one crop in the year, whereas the ordinary variety yields two crops. Several fruit-trees have been planted out, including apple, pear, cherry, nectarine, and plum; and the tables of the European residents are supplied with vegetables from the garden attached to the farm. A *Manual of Potato Cultivation* compiled by the superintendent has been translated into Assamese, and copies have been distributed among the adjoining Hill tribes. The general failure in all the agricultural experiments is attributed partly to the unfitness of the soil, and still more to the ravages of white ants and other insects peculiar to the Hills. The attempts to improve the indigenous breeds of live stock have been equally unfortunate. During the two years 1874-76 the sum of Rs. 1744

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ESTIMATE OF EXPORTS FROM THE KHASI AND JAINTIA HILLS FOR THE YEAR 1876-77.

ARTICLES.	RATES OF VALUATION.	WEIGHT OR NUMBER.	VALUE.
	Rs.		Rs.
Betel-nuts and betel-leaves,	6. 8 per *mound*.	18,000 *mounds*.	1,44,000
Betel-nuts,	—	—	93,600
Black pepper,	1. 8 per *mound*.	900 "	1,800
Beans,	—	—	3,000
Cinnamon,	4. 0 per *mound*.	500 "	2,000
Chillies,	8. 0 "	3,000 "	24,000
"	" "	3,000 "	6,000
Fruits (jack and limes),	—	—	6,000
Garlic,	—	—	3,000
Ginger,	—	—	1,800
Honey,	15. 0 per *mound*.	800 "	12,000
India-rubber,	90. 0 "	80 "	7,200
Iron implements,	—	—	2,000
Limestone,	900. 0 per 1000 *mounds*.	1,800,000 "	1,800,000
Oranges,	10. 0 per 1000.	3,400,000 No.	37,600
Potatoes,	2. 8 per *mound*.	100,500 *mounds*.	301,500
Pine-apples,	—	—	6,000
Rice,	20. 0 per *mound*.	5,000 "	100,000
Timber, bamboos, and canes,	—	—	30,000
Turmeric,	2. 0 per *mound*.	700 "	1,400
Betel-nut,	35. 0 "	98 "	1,430
Total,	—	—	1,80,3,330

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Text continued from page 138.]

This price is about the same as it was twenty years ago, but the quantity has increased fourfold. The potato was first introduced into the Hills in 1830 by Mr. David Scott, who was then the Governor-General's Agent. 'No greater boon could have been conferred upon the people.' The local trade is entirely in the hands of the Khásis themselves, and the larger portion of the produce is despatched direct to Calcutta. According to the registration returns of river traffic in Bengal, the export of provisions (including vegetables) from Sylhet in 1876-77 was 103,108 *mounds*, valued at Rs. 369,324, or £36,932, at the rate of Rs. 3 per *mound*.

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The export of oranges in 1876-77 was 3,400,000 in number, valued at Rs. 37,600, at the rate of Rs. 11 per 1000. These figures apparently show a great decrease since 1858. At that time Mr. Inglis possessed the entire monopoly of the trade, by means of the leases which he held from the Khási Chiefs of all the valuable groves. The annual produce of his groves was estimated at forty-five millions of oranges, having increased from eleven millions within the

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439 previous twenty years. The oranges, like the lime, were brought
648 down to Mr. Inglis' depot at Chhaták, where they were sold to
• 245 the dealers at the rate of about Rs. 1. 12 per 1000, or less than
434 half their present estimated price. It is stated in Mr. Allen's Report, that the Calcutta market was then chiefly supplied from the groves of Shella Púnjí and Bor Púnjí; the produce of the other villages was more perishable, and required to be sold in the neighbouring Districts. The fruit is known in Calcutta as 'Sylhet oranges.' The Bengal registration returns for 1876-77 show a total export from Sylhet of 64,505 *maunds* of 'fruit,' valued at Rs. 193,515, or £19,351.

439 The export of raw cotton appears to have greatly increased. In 1876-77 the total quantity exported was 36,000 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 216,000, or £21,600, at the rate of Rs. 6 per *maund*. Twenty years before the export had been only 12,000 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 42,000, at the rate of only Rs. 3. 8 per *maund*. The cotton is of inferior quality, with a short and woolly staple. It is chiefly consumed by the Sylhet weavers. The total registered export from that District in 1876-77 was only 4300 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 64,500,
434 at the high rate of Rs. 15 per *maund*.

439 The chief article of import now, as twenty years ago, is rice; for
[178 the hill-men have never grown sufficient for their own consumption,
243] and the recent establishment of the Civil Station of Shillong has increased the demand. In 1876-77 the total imports of rice were estimated at 205,800 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 720,300, or £72,030, at the rate of Rs. 3. 8 per *maund*. Twenty years ago the imports were nearly as great, viz. 150,000 *maunds*; but the value was only Rs. 225,000, at the rate of Rs. 1. 8 per *maund*, or less than one-half the present value. The chief source of supply is Sylhet District, which sends its surplus to the tea gardens of Cáchár, as well as to these Hills, and also exported, in the year 1876-77, 214,000 *maunds* of rice and 433,100 *maunds* of paddy into Bengal.

The importation of fish (fresh and dried) has enormously increased. In 1876-77 the total amount was 35,900 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 215,400, or £21,540, at the rate of Rs. 6 per *maund*. Twenty years ago the value was only Rs. 20,000, but the quantity is not given. The preparation of dried fish is a flourishing industry in the adjoining District of Sylhet.

The importation of cotton cloth has increased in an almost equal proportion. The value in 1876-77 was Rs. 158,000, or £15,800, as